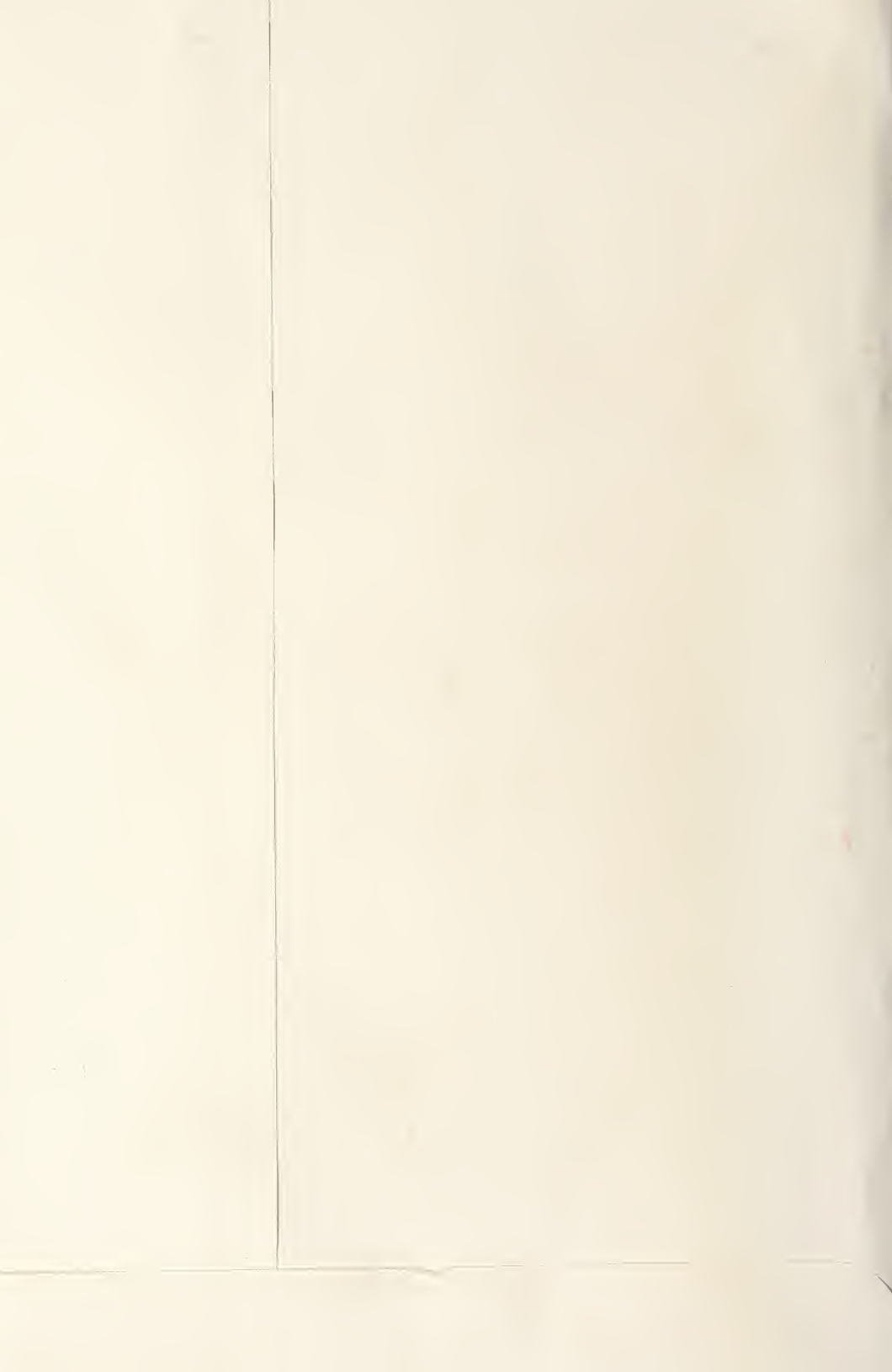


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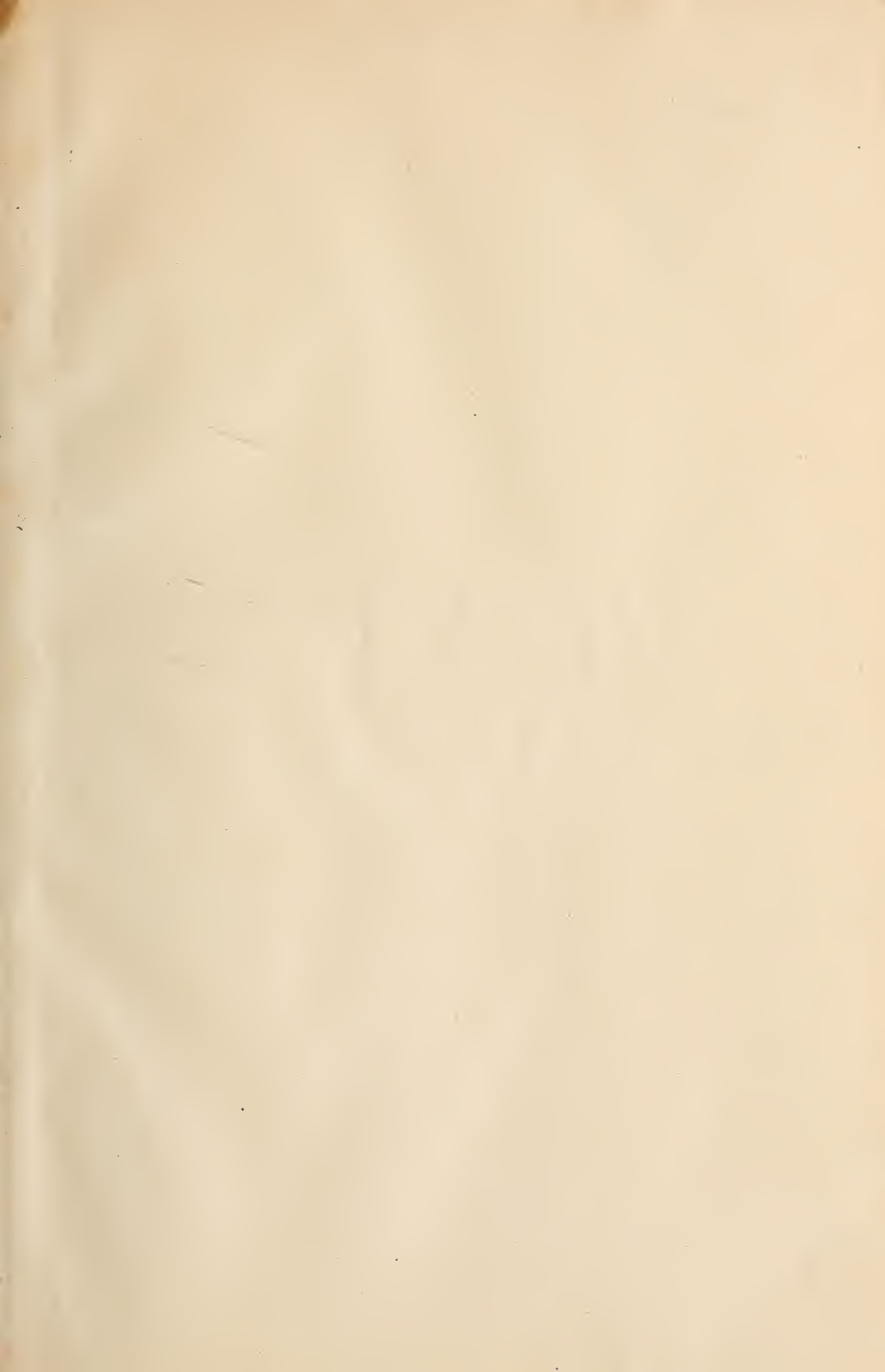
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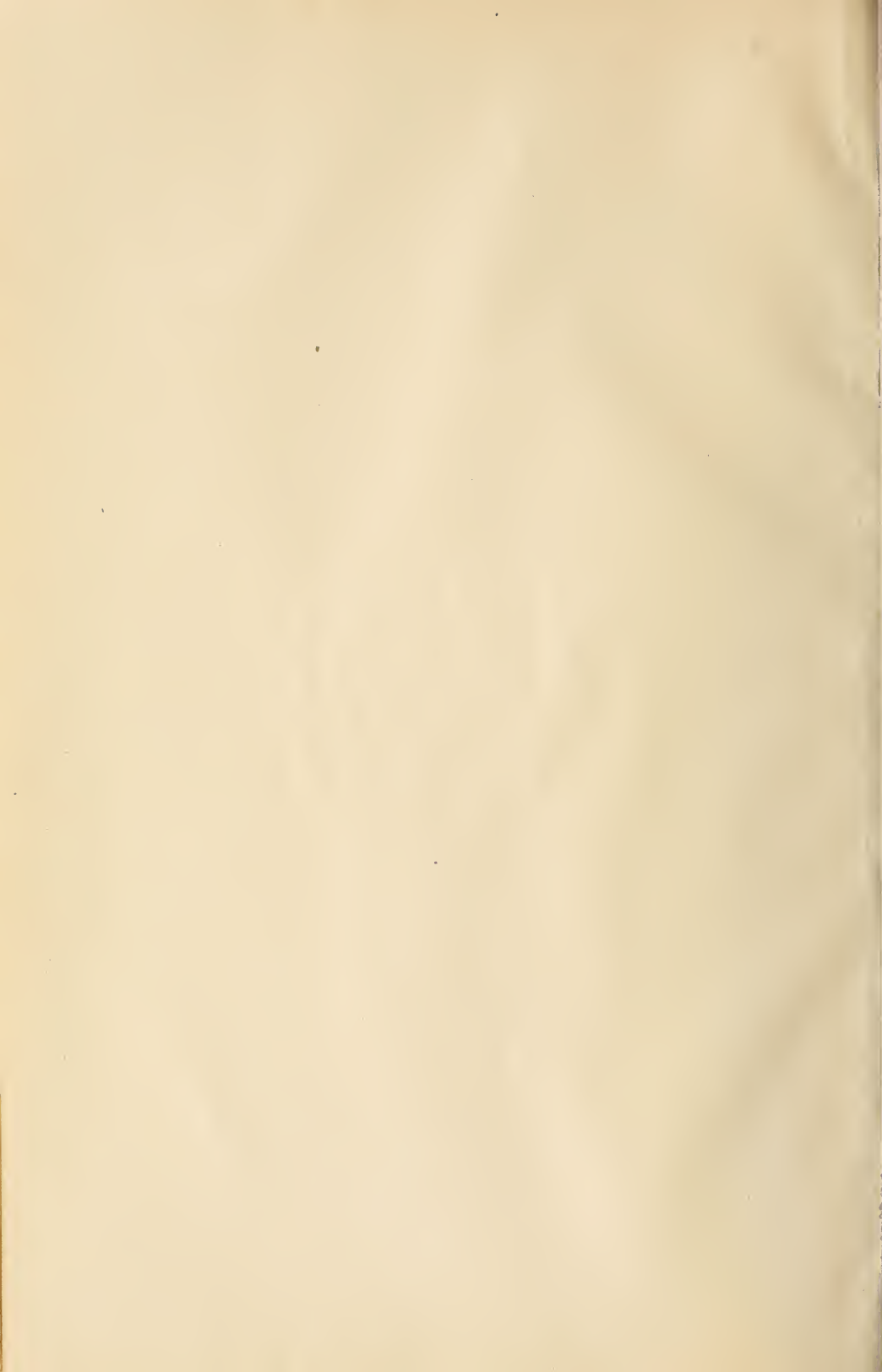
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THE CONFESSIONAL.

WHAT IT IS NOT,

AND

WHAT IT IS.

BY THE EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY.

PRICE, 25 CENTS.



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NOTICE.

"This advantage we owe to the multiplicity of books on the same subject; that one falls in the way of one man, and another best suits the level or comprehension of another. Everything that is written does not come into the hands of all, and hence, perhaps, some may meet with my book who have heard nothing of others which have treated better the same subject." As the foregoing, from one of the ancient Fathers, fully embraces our reasons for issuing the following pages, further comment is unnecessary.

EDITOR.

NEWTON, KANSAS:

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THE CONFESSIONAL.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONFESSIONAL.—WHAT IT IS NOT.—WHY NON-CATHOLICS DO NOT WISH TO SPEAK OF IT OR DISCUSS THE POWER OF FORGIVING SINS.

It is a matter of no little surprise with what alacrity non-Catholics speak of the achievements of the Church. They are willing to look down the vista of ages and in the light of history to accord to the Church the civilizing and christainizing of every tribe, people and nation that now has or ever had the light of faith. The preservation of the Sacred Scriptures and the ancient classic literature from the devastating hand of the northern barbarians that swept Europe, leaving but ruin and destruction in their wake, is readily attributed to the Catholic Church. There is nothing but praise for that Church which gave birth to the ancient republics of Venice, Genoa, Florence and Pisa, and which gave to the world the universities of Rome, Florence, Padua, Louvain, Salamanca, Paris, Oxford and hundreds of others of lesser note. They are loud in praise of a religion that made the marble breathe, the organ sing, the canvas speak and the cold cathedral stones glorify God. They love to dwell upon the Church's charity, which, like that of her divine Master, knows no person, no people, no nation; but the world over, in the hospitals, asylums, plague-stricken districts, on the battle-field, amidst shot and shell, among the dying and dead, her gentle hand is felt, her sympathetic voice is heard and her hopeful smile is soul-inspiring. In a word, the Church's glories are discussed with as much warmth and admiration by non-Catholics of intelligence as by some of her own sons; while her doctrines are spoken of in no disparaging tone, but seemingly for the purpose of being better understood. There is one doctrine, however, one subject which they do not wish to hear or discuss and this is the sacrament of penance or, as they are want to call it, the

Confessional. But this is not a subject of astonishment to the student of history. Ever since the defection of Martin Luther it has been credited to Catholic belief that the priest kept his dupes in subjection and superstition by means of the confessional. It has been announced from the pulpit and by means of the press that for a money consideration the confessor freed the penitent of his sins and sent him forth to indulge his passions, enjoy his ill-gotten goods and kill, if need be, reputed heretics. In too many instances malice prompted these slanders of the Confessional. There is no denying that the fundamental doctrine of the father of the reformation, "Faith alone is sufficient," created a disgust for, and militated against, the Confessional. The doctrine of predestination, as advanced by John Calvin, rendered good works worse than useless and the Confessional a rock of scandal. For obvious reasons persons of easy morals were not hard to make believe the new doctrine and hold the Confessional as the propaganda of immorality. All except the semblance of the sacred tribunal dropped from Protestant religious practice and only a ridiculous parody, the making of public confession, remained. Protestants imagine that at these so-called confessions the Holy Spirit speaks to the soul of the sinner and tells him that "he is absolved, regenerated, sealed with(?) the Lamb, a member of the just made perfect, one of the chosen ones of the Most High," etc. Many a hearty "amen" goes up when the sinner tells the assembled congregation, pharisee-like, what the Spirit breathed into him. In this masquerade the idea of grievous offences against God is lost sight of, Magdalene-like humility is disregarded and self-announced righteousness alone is considered. Who ever heard the crimes that undermine commercial, family and social circles confessed thus? The minister never thinks of getting down to public confession, nor do his hearers ever accuse themselves except in a general way. Is it any wonder, then, that non-Catholics do not take kindly to the Confessional? Is not the mode of reconciliation adopted by the reformers much easier to flesh and blood than that which the Catholic church teaches and practices? But does not reason dictate that, as the offense is committed against God, God, and not man, has the right to say how the offence is to be blotted out and reconciliation effected?

CHAPTER II.

THE CONFESSIONAL IS NOT THE INVENTION OF PRIESTS.—THE MOST
ANCIENT OF THE FATHERS SPEAK OF IT.—PAGAN PHILOSOPHERS FAVOR CONFESSION.

Another reason may be alleged why non-Catholics do not wish to speak of the Confessional, and it is this: for centuries have Protestant pulpits resounded with the gratuitous assertion that the Confessional is the invention of the priests. Now, if this be so, why not name the date when it was first introduced and state the name of the inventor? The most ancient of the Fathers of the church speak of confession as an institution which had existed from the very foundation of Christianity. St. Clement, of Rome, a contemporary of St. John, urges the faithful to confess their sins to the priest in order to be reconciled to God. Tertullian, who lived in the second century, speaks of the Confessional so clearly that there can be no doubt of its existence in his time. "I think," says he, "there are some who shun confession as an exposure of themselves or put it off from day to day, thinking more of the shame than of their cure, like those who, affected with some disease, conceal it from the physician and perish through shame."* St. Ireneus, St. Cyprian, Origen and many of the ancient Fathers and writers speak in the same explicit manner. The obligation is binding on all the members of the Church, priests, bishops and the pope himself, but this would not be so were the Confessional the invention of priests. If confession have not come down from the apostles, the innovation, like all heresies, must have left a distinct mark on the pages of history; a universal outcry must have been raised against the bold innovator who first obliged all Christians, including priests, bishops and popes, to confess their most secret offences to a man like themselves. Where does history record the innovation? When did the loud voice of the chronicler of events proclaim that Christians were first obliged to go to confession? The voice of reason is loud against those who make the confessional what it is not, or who would destroy its very existence. Who, conscious of sin, persuaded of his frailty, loaded with

*De Pen.

guilt, stung with remorse, in dread of the judgment of God on account of mortal sin committed after baptism, would not be glad that Christ, and not man, has instituted a means of obtaining pardon? A friend seeks relief by revealing his secret sorrows to a friend; the sick disclose their secret disorders to a physician; men apologize for their offences to each other; criminals, goaded by remorse, often give themselves up to public justice; the robber and the thief for the same reasons restore their ill-gotten goods; the murderer often makes public evidence against himself on the scaffold. So deeply is the principle of confession rooted in our nature that Seneca and other pagan philosophers laud the advantage of the confession of faults to a friend.

"Why does the world hate the Confessional? I will tell you in a word. Because the men of the world are afraid of laying their hearts open. They know that there are black spots, that there are dark stains, deep wounds, old scars, open sores, and they hide them in darkness. The innocent have no fear, for their hearts are unspotted, and though conscious of many faults and many weaknesses they are free from the stains and the wounds of an evil life. They are not afraid; to them Confession is easy. But those who are conscious that they are carrying within them a secret the world does not know, of which their neighbors are not aware, which the nearest of them does not expect, which they would rather die than reveal,—according to the shrinking of flesh and blood, forgetting all the while that God knows everything,—they fear and hate the thought of Confession. This is the true reason why the world rails against Confession; this is the reason why every revolution that breaks out at once burns the Confessional. It dare not come near the Confessional. When it sees a Confessional, it sees a forerunning witness of the great White Throne and the day of judgment, and to get rid of this intolerable reality the anti-Christian revolution tears it out of the church and burns it in the street."*

*Cardinal Manning.



CHAPTER III.

ALL CHRISTIANS SHOULD ADMIT THAT JESUS CHRIST MUST HAVE INSTITUTED A MEANS OF RESTORING PEACE AND GRACE TO THE SOUL AFTER ITS DEFILEMENT BY MORTAL SIN, AND SHOULD ACCEPT, RATHER THAN REPUDIATE, THIS GREAT BOON.

It is strange that those who call themselves Christians will not even stop to investigate one of the most consoling of doctrines and one of the most elevating of practices. Who professing faith in Christianity can deny it? With Christ comes the realization of the fondest hopes of the just in the Old Law; with Christ come undreamt-of heavenly benisons; with Christ comes a peace to which the world had been a stranger; with Christ comes a remedy for every evil, a balm for every heart; with Christ come hope to the despairing, joy to the sorrowing and health to the sick of soul and body. That downcast, wayward daughter of Eve, despised by society, shunned by her former associates, whose very presence caused the crimson blush of shame to mantle the cheeks of the pure, is lovingly received and mercifully absolved by Him who was the Way and the Truth and the Refuge of sinners. Yet, in the evening of the enlightened nineteenth century, though a scandal to modern Pharisees, are the same words, "thy sins are forgiven," "go in peace and sin no more," repeated five thousand times a day to as many repenting Magdalenes in the sacred tribunal. Thus is the saving blood of Jesus Christ applied to our souls; thus does He prove to us the truth of the words of the Holy Ghost, "Come to me all ye that labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you;" thus does He give renewed evidence of His love; in fine, thus does He show that He is not only the light of the world but the salt of the earth, which cures the sores and festering wounds. Sin is the sore spot of the soul; sin is the hideous ulcer of society; sin is the death-dealing leprosy that abounds everywhere: in commercial pursuits, making men untrustworthy and dishonest; in domestic circles, making servants defraud and steal, making masters exacting and unjust, making children disobedient, making parents forgetful of their sacred duties toward

their offspring, making young men impure and married men unfaithful; in social and political circles, making Christians so far forget themselves as to indulge in back-biting, calumny, detraction and other vices condemned by the law of God and revolting to nature itself: in fine, making slave-owners, soul-barterers, having everything venal, everything ready to sacrifice on the altar of personal preferment. To purge out all this leaven of wickedness, to remedy all these ills, to heal all these wounds, to sweeten all the bitterness and corruption of society, Jesus Christ has provided the salt of the earth, the bower of love, the mercy-seat of the Most High God, the sacred tribunal. Those who differ with us and who know only what the Confessional is not, may deny it, yet the truth remains; the goodness and mercy of God should be extolled rather than despised, accepted rather than repudiated, sought rather than rejected. Were we not convinced of its divine origin, that it is one of the greatest gifts of God to man, and that it is the most beneficial institution to the individual as well as to society, we should not hesitate to pronounce it, after the example of our separated brethren, an innovation of capricious man. Yes, heart and hand and tongue would unite to condemn the Confessional had it not the sanction and power claimed for it by the Catholic Church. Who can gainsay it? Whatever Sacred Scripture, tradition and reason concur to pronounce of divine origin should be so regarded. But Sacred Scripture, tradition and reason concur, as we shall see in the sequel, to pronounce the sacrament of penance, or the Confessional, of divine origin; therefore it should be so regarded.



CHAPTER IV.

NO ONE ON EARTH CAN PERFORM A MIRACLE; NEITHER CAN ANYONE
FORGIVE SIN BY HIS OWN POWER OR PRIVATE AUTHORITY.

—BUT CHRIST HAD THE POWER AND WILLED IT
AND ACTUALLY CONFERRED UPON HIS
CHURCH THE POWER TO FOR-
GIVE SINS.

It is true that the power of forgiving sins belongs to God alone, as the power of working miracles belongs to Him only. Hence no one on earth has ever or will ever perform a miracle; neither has anyone ever nor will anyone ever absolve from sin by his own power or private authority. But God has been often pleased to communicate to men, as His instruments, the power of working many miracles. He made Moses, Elias and Elicius in the Old Law, and the Sts. Peter, Paul and John in the New Law, the instruments of His power to raise the dead to life and perform a great number of stupendous miracles. Can He not in a like manner empower the pastors of His church, as His instruments, to absolve those who are truly repentant? Can He not do that which men in the world have the power to do and actually do every day with regard to their fellow man, namely, depute some one to pronounce absolution or forgiveness on certain conditions for a fault committed? When there is question of sins against God who can question it? He can depute man to pardon in His name and by His authority, if He have the power, if He so willed it, and if, having the power and will, He so conferred it. Firstly, as to the power, no one can deny it, as there is question of offences against Himself, and certainly God can do, as we have seen, what men are doing daily in behalf of their fellowmen who may have offended them. Secondly, He willed it, for he promised solemnly this power to his apostles and their successors, as is evident from the following words: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." * The same promise He made at another time to St. Peter; "And I say to thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell

*Matt. 18 : 18.

shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven.”* Thirdly, He did confer the power. The foregoing promises were fulfilled by our divine Lord after His resurrection; for, as we read in the gospel, He appeared to His apostles and, standing in their midst, breathed upon them and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost . . . whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.”† That Christ really did impart this power is evident, too, from the very commission to His apostles, “As the father hath sent me so I also send you;” ‡ that is, I invest you with the same power and authority with which I am invested, and consequently with the power and authority of absolving and forgiving sins. Let us see what power Jesus Christ had: “All power is given me in heaven and on earth.” § Now, in this “all power” must be included, as is evident, the power of absolving and forgiving sin; but He sends His apostles, as He himself was sent, with “all power,” and therefore with the power of absolving and forgiving sins. This power could not cease with the apostles; for, as sin will last to the end of the world, so it was necessary that a means to remit the same should be left to the pastors of the church till the end of time. From the very nature of the institution this is evident, because penance is a sacrament. It was instituted by Christ, who promises grace, and it has external signs, and consequently is a sacrament and as lasting as the church itself.

*Matt. 16 : 18. †John 20 : 22. ‡St. John 20 : 21. §Matt. 28 : 18.



CHAPTER V.

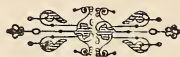
CHRIST ACTUALLY IMPOSED AN OBLIGATION ON THE FAITHFUL TO CONFESS THEIR SINS IN ORDER TO HAVE THEM REMITTED OR RETAINED.

Since Jesus Christ has invested the pastors of his Church with the power of binding and loosing, of remitting and retaining sins, according to the merits of the cause and the dispositions of the penitent, it follows as a necessary consequence that He also laid an obligation on the faithful to declare their sins in order to have them remitted or retained; for otherwise, how could the pastors of the church be able to execute this divine commission or exercise the power given them? How can this commission be exercised if the sinner be not under the obligation of laying open the true state of his soul by a candid confession? Some sinners are to be forgiven and others are not; how shall the priest know whether to absolve or retain? God reserves to Himself the intuitive knowledge of the heart; hence, if the priest is to judge the penitent must bear witness. Now, unless the priest judge he can neither forgive nor retain; but he is appointed to forgive and retain, hence he must judge who are worthy and who are unworthy, and for this the confession of the sinner is necessary. Was it to no purpose that our Lord gave the Church the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven? Why should the pastors of the Church hold the keys if the sinner can open for himself? Why should a judge have power and jurisdiction if the culprit can, by his own individual efforts, become reconciled? It would be unreasonable and to no purpose to invest a judge with power which he could not exercise and with jurisdiction which in practice counts for naught. Equally unreasonable and to no purpose would it be to invest the Church with a power in virtue of which its pastors have power and jurisdiction to bind and loose, to remit and retain. In view of what has been said above, Christ has communicated such power and jurisdiction; but the act is unreasonable and to no purpose if it cannot be used. Who, believing in Christianity, can subscribe to such a conclusion? Furthermore, if He have given the power of absolving and retaining sins to the Church to no purpose, he has not acted reasonably; he has not spoken the truth; he has deceived us; he is not the Son of the living

God; we are free to live and die in sin without any serious consequence. Who will endorse this! As we have seen, the Church has power to bind and loose, in virtue of which the priest is the spiritual judge. But how shall he judge without knowing the cause? How shall he hear the cause but from the accusations of the penitent? The priest is the physician of the soul, but how shall he prescribe a remedy without knowing the malady? Surely a judge must have a full knowledge of the cause and a physician must know the disorder, the one to pronounce a just sentence and the other to prescribe a suitable remedy.

Again, if Christ merely said, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven," the pastors of the church could forgive sins without confession; but Christ adds, "Whose sins you shall retain they are retained." Hence it follows that the power conferred is a discretionary one which neither priest, bishop, pope nor apostle could have exercised prudently and justly except on the thorough knowledge of the conscience of the penitent. But this cannot be acquired otherwise than by the confession of the penitents. Absolution or denial of the same should and must follow from the nature of the case, but, as this cannot be ascertained except from the mouth of the penitent, it follows as a consequence that confession is necessary.

*Ingalls, *Globe-Democrat*, April 9th, '93.



CHAPTER VI.

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH BEAR TESTIMONY TO AND PROVE THE NECESSITY OF AURICULAR CONFESSION.—THE SACRED TRIBUNAL HARMONIZES WITH THE PLAN OF THE CHURCH'S ARCHITECT.

St. Augustine says, "To pretend that it is sufficient to confess to God alone is to destroy the commission of Christ, to contradict the gospel and to make void the power of the keys which were given to the Church." Speaking on the subject in another place, and as if anticipating the objections of the reformers, the same saint says, "If you wish to have heaven open to thee, open thy mouth in confession to the priest." "Whosoever is ashamed," says St. John Chrysostom, "to declare his sins and will not confess them, he shall be confounded on the day of judgment in the face of the whole world." St. Chrysostom says, moreover, "Penance compels the sinner willingly to undergo all things; in his heart is contrition; on his lips confession. and in his deed all humility or a fruitful satisfaction."* This is also the teaching of St. Jerome. "If," says the holy doctor, "the sick man is ashamed to discover the wounds of his soul to the physician, he cannot be cured." St. Ambrose says in his book on penance, when refuting the heresy of the Novatians, who asserted that to the Lord alone was reserved the power of forgiving sins, "Who reveres God more, he who obeys or he who resists His commands? God commands us to obey His ministers, whom, when we obey, give honor to God alone." Again the same holy doctor says, "Without the confession of sin no man can be justified from sin."

St. Cyprian, in his sermon on the lapsed, very explicitly teaches that those who, "sorrowfully and simply confessing that same (thought) to the priests of God, make the disclosure of their conscience, expose the burden of their soul, seek a salutary medicine for their wounds." Finally, such is the unanimous and concurring voice and testimony of all the Fathers and Doctors of the Church regarding confession.

The institution of the tribunal of penance is in accordance

*Sermon II of the Words of the Lord.

with the entire structure of our holy religion. It harmonizes with the general plan of her Divine Architect, as is evident by comparing it with other portions of that sacred edifice raised by the hand of God. Before the star of hope floated on the breath of a Judæan morning, before the angelic messengers announced the coming of the Messiah, and before the kings offered their regal gifts at the crib of Bethlehem, a design had been sketched, a plan had been penciled, an edifice was to be raised, whose vast proportions were to be commensurate with the earth and whose golden dome was to penetrate heaven itself. Years rolled on and centuries glided into the past, during which men and angels could not interpret the mystic design till it pleased Jesus Christ to utter these joyous words, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "And Jesus coming spoke to them saying: 'All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.'"* Now the mystery is unraveled, the darkness is dispelled, the mystic design is none other than the Church of Jesus Christ. But how did He institute it? Our divine Lord forms the College of the Apostles. He teaches His heaven-sent doctrine to humble fishermen. In process of time He commands them to go forth and promulgate the Gospel. Their mission is to preach the truths they had heard throughout the entire world, and He imposes an obligation on all men of hearing them under pain of losing their salvation. "He that heareth you," says Christ, "heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me."† Thus He constituted them and their successors the infallible authority from whom we are bound to receive doctrines; the teachers whom we are obliged to hear and follow. This is precisely the course He adopts in instituting the sacred tribunal of confession. He does not leave the manner of atoning for sin to the capricious will of every individual sinner. He does not make each person the judge of what are the necessary conditions for an efficacious repent-

*Matt. 28 : 18-20. †Luke 10 : 16.

ance or of the means of reconciliation after turning his back on God by mortal sin. No, He institutes a ministry whose duty it is to examine the dispositions of each individual sinner, and He confers on it the power to remit or retain the sins of the culprit, according to his dispositions. Thus we can easily perceive that in the sacred tribunal Christ has precluded the evil of self delusion by appointing an impartial judge. He has furnished us with a physician in our sickness, an advisor in our difficulties, an instructor in our ignorance, a director of our whole conduct and a peace-maker to reconcile penitent man to an offended God.



CHAPTER VII.

ADVANTAGES OF THE CONFESSIONAL.—ROUSSEAU'S AND VOLTAIRE'S
ADMISSIONS.

The confessional restores us to the grace and friendship of God and unites us to Him as a friend to a friend. The reconciliation with God is followed with spiritual delight, peace and tranquility in the souls of those who devoutly and piously approach the sacred tribunal, placing all the necessary conditions, and bringing thereto all the dispositions becoming a true penitent. What a hopeful thought! All the sins which separate the soul from God are wiped out and forgotten. Hence the prophet says, "If the wicked do penance for all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment and justice living, he shall live and not die; and I will not remember all his iniquities which he hath done."* St. John, the beloved apostle of Jesus Christ, speaking on the same subject, says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."† And again the same apostle adds, "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Just; and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."‡ It is worthy of note that philosophers who had little or no regard for the Christian religion are loud in praise of the benefits accruing to society from the Confessional. "How many restitutions and reparations," says Rousseau, "does not confession produce?"§ Voltaire is frank enough to admit that "Confession is a most excellent expedient—a bridle to guilt, invented in the remotest antiquity; it was practiced at the celebration of all the ancient mysteries. We have imitated and sanctified this wise custom which has a great influence in prevailing on hearts burning with resentment to forgive one another."|| Is it any wonder that the sinner who refuses to believe in this institution sinks into despair? To whom can he unbosom himself? Probably to a friend. But he knows, perhaps, to his sorrow that he cannot rely on the friendship of man. It has been well said, Will he make the desert his confidant? The desert would incessantly reverberate in the guilty ear the sound of those trumpets which Nero fancied he heard around the tomb

*Ezech. 18 : 21-22. †I. Ep. John 1 : 9. ‡I. Ep. John 2 : 1. §Aemil. Vol. 3, Page 201.

||Guest Ency., Vol. 3, Page 234.

of his mother.* Since our fellow-men and nature itself are merciless, is it not consoling that God is willing to embrace all to His loving bosom? "Wash yourself; be clean; take away the evil of your devices from my eyes; cease to do perversely; learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed; judge for the fatherless; defend the widow. And then come and accuse me," saith the Lord, "if your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow; and if they be as red as crimson, they shall be white as wool." † What words of mercy! What consolation to the outcast and sinner of good will! What benefits must not accrue to him who, Magdalene-like, approaches the mercy-seat wherein innocence and repentance are made twin sisters! The Council of Trent declared that "to those who have fallen after baptism, the sacrament of penance is as necessary for salvation as baptism is to those who have not been already regenerated." ‡ St Jerome calls it "a second plank." §

*Tacit. †Isa. 1 : 16 Et Seq. ‡Sess. XIV. §Ep. 84.



CHAPTER VIII.

ADVANTAGES OF THE CONFESSIONAL (CONTINUED.)—CARDINAL NEWMAN'S TESTIMONY.

The cancelling of sins, then, is the object and end of the Confessional and no one can hope for pardon who despises this salutary institution and refuses to take advantage of it; hence, we read, "Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish."* While it is true that lighter sins may and are forgiven otherwise than by directly submitting them to the keys of the Church, yet some kind of penance is required. "If without penance venial sins could be remitted, the daily penance performed for them by the Church would be to no purpose."† The Confessional, above all other institutions of Christ, brings home to every man the full and entire responsibility of doing works of penance, not only for mortal, but also for venial sins. It suggests and points out the obligation of doing penance for all offences against God. It mirrors to every soul the deformity of sin and the necessity of repenting for each and every one. The Confessional creates fidelity and strengthens it, creates honesty and enforces it, creates purity and preserves it, creates charity and inflames it. That vow of fidelity made at the altar between two loving and confiding hearts is preserved, despite the danger to conjugal affections and even of divorce, by the Confessional. The public servant is enabled amidst the difficulties and temptations of court life to keep his solemn oath by means of the Confessional. The master is not afraid to trust the keys of his cellar and safe to the Catholic servant, and the merchant his valuable wares to the practical Catholic clerk, and the banker his gold to his cashier who goes regularly to Confession. In virtue of the Confessional those angels of mercy, those white-robed daughters of the Church, those consecrated virgins of the Most High, are enabled to persevere, keep their vows and prosecute their works of charity in favor of the fatherless waif, the neglected consumptive nearing the brink of an early grave because, perhaps, of an ill spent life, districts breathing infection and death, and the dying soldier, whose mother, hundreds of miles away, is hopefully praying on bended knees that the God of battles may give

*Luke 13 : 3. †St. Aug., Book 50.

courage to his heart, strength to his arms and victory to his sword. Those priests and monks who sever family ties, quit a home of luxury and bid a lasting adieu, perhaps, to high position in the world to embrace a life of hardship, self-abnegation and labor unrequited in this world, know full well their religious life would be of short duration were it not for the weekly confession. Chirity of the martyrs, love of the confessors and the ardor of the virgins were enkindled and fanned into wondrous flames, whose dazzling light illumine and attract an awe-stricken world,—simply the product of frequent worthy confessions. The Confessional raises the soul from its lethargy to a wakeful remembrance of God. When the cold sweat gathers fast upon the brow and the night of death begins to cast its shadows on the once bright eyes, when the religion (?) of health and wealth can offer no assistance, it is the Confessional alone that gives hope to the dying soul. Whence comes it that the loving husband, so soon to be torn from the wife of his bosom, bears the coming separation with such calmness and patience! Whence does it come that the faithful wife, soon to be visited by the angel of death, can bid her husband a last fond farewell without emotion! Whence comes it that the fond mother can call her children around her dying bed and give them one after another her advice and blessing with seeming indifference—a mother, who, during long years of trials and hardships, loved her dear ones with more than ordinary mother's love! Whence can that sinner, so lately driven to the verge of despair by remorse of conscience, derive such peace and tranquillity when he has seen his companions in fortune shipwrecked, in pleasure unsatisfied and in life disappointed, seek relief in the surging waves, in the bottle labeled with the skull and cross bones, in the discharge of a firearm! The answer is expressed in one word, the Confessional. Were everyone to make use of this divine institution aright, there would be no more heart-breaking, no more despair, no more fruitless tears, no more suicides, no more terrible records of robberies and murders, no more mothers hardening their hearts and making themselves worse than the most ferocious animals, no more of that cool, calculating dishonesty, no more men casting their wiles about each other like spider's webs to entrap and deceive, no more unfaithful husbands, no more disobedient children, no more lawbreakers and disloyal cit-

izens, no more quarrels, revenge, wars and sacrifice of millions to the pride of heartless, regal tyrants, no more Catholics who are a scandal to their neighbors, a disgrace to the name, perjurers to their sacramental vows and traitors to the cause they are in duty bound to uphold. There would be an end of misery in the world; all would be peace and happiness if everyone would recognize this, one of the greatest gifts of God to men, open his festering wounds and allow the Salt of Penance to cleanse, purify and fit him for his destiny. In fine, the Confessional is the savior of the moral man and also the savior of the physical man. Speaking of the influence and advantage of the Confessional, Cardinal Newman makes use of the following beautiful words: "How many are the souls in distress, anxiety or loneliness, where the one need is to find a being to whom they can pour out their feelings unheard by the world? Tell them out they must. They cannot tell them out to those whom they see every hour; they want to tell them and not to tell them. And they want to tell out, and yet be as if they were not told; they wish to tell them, yet are not strong enough to despise them; they wish to tell them to one who can at once advise and sympathize with them; they wish to relieve themselves of a load in order to gain a solace, to receive the assurance that there is one who thinks of them and one to whom in thought they can recur, to whom they can betake themselves, if necessary, from time to time while they are in the world. How many a Protestant heart would leap at the news of such a benefit, putting aside all ideas of sacramental ordinances altogether! If there is a heavenly idea in the Catholic Church—looking at it simply as an idea—surely, next after the Blessed Sacrament, confession is such. And such it is ever found; in fact, the very act of kneeling, the low and contrite voice, the sign of the cross hanging, so to say, over the head bowed low, and the words of peace and blessing—oh, what a soothing charm is there, which the world can neither give nor take away! Oh, what a piercing, heart-subduing tranquillity, provoking tears of joy, is poured almost substantially and physically upon the soul—the oil of gladness as the Scripture calls it—when the penitent at length rises, his God reconciled to him, his sins rolled away forever! This is confession as it is in fact, as those who bear witness to it know by experience."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CONFESSIONAL IS THE CIVILIZER OF MAN AND CONSERVATOR OF HIS MORALS.—A GLANCE AT ROMAN SO-CALLED CIVILIZATION WITHOUT THE CONFESSIONAL.

A discussion of the question which forms the title and an appreciation of what the Confessional has really done for mankind cannot be better brought to light than by presenting a few pages of history. We quote only those facts which cannot be controverted, at least by those even a little conversant with history. Augustus arose to imperial power and preserved the same by the commission of crime. His reign, while one of peace, was also distinguished by corruption. Tiberius rejoiced to find the Roman people and Senate below him in baseness. Rome loved and honored, yes deified, Nero. The Decemvirs gloried in debasing Rome. Marius took delight in shedding the blood of the nobles and Sylla that of the plebians. Catiline's followers bound themselves to murder their own fathers and ruin all that opposed their nefarious conspiracy. * Augustus commands a father and son to kill each other and the inhuman order is obeyed. † The tyrant Nero is worshipped as a god and has his temples, his altars and sacrifices. Claudian, the minister of Severus, having married his daughter to the eldest son of the Emperor, caused one hundred freemen of Rome, some of whom were husbands and fathers of families, to be mutilated "in order that his daughter might have a retinue of eunuchs worthy of an eastern queen." ‡ Cato gives his wife Marcia to Hortensius and after the death of the latter, for the sake of fortune, takes her back. Cicero banishes Terentia for the purpose of marrying his servant, Publia. Seneca says that there were women who no longer counted their years by consuls but by the number of their husbands. Nero instituted the Juvenalian feasts where senators and ladies of the first rank were obliged to appear on the stage, after the example of the Emperor, and to sing obscene songs, at the same time imitating the gestures of the clowns. Gladiators, musicians and courtesans perfectly nude mingled with the most illustrious senators and foremost ladies of Rome at some of their banquets. What depravity! The slaves who cultivated the fields were chained by the foot and only allowed a little bread with

*Sallust, Cat. Cons. †Suet. ‡Dion., Book 76.

salt and water as nourishment. Caligula wished that the whole Roman people had but one head that he might strike it off with but a single blow.* Titus celebrated his father's birthday by having three thousand Jews devoured by wild beasts.† The mere suspicion of the Emperor was enough to have an edict go forth to slaughter five, ten, twenty thousand persons of all rank, of both sexes and of every age.‡ During the reign of Claudius no fewer than nineteen thousand slaughtered one another, after first addressing the Emperor, "Hail, Cæsar! they who are about to die salute thee," for the amusement of the Roman populace. Strange to say, Tacitus calls this a fine sight. Other and more disgusting examples might be deduced from the history of pagan nations, but let these, from the foremost nation in letters and in conquest, suffice. What could save the human race from this new deluge and elevate its morals? Certainly not the priests of Flora, Venus and Bacchus. Polytheism did not and could not conserve the morals; its votaries, on the contrary, added to the momentum of their downward course. Destruction was in store for a people of such morals. Attila and Alaric would have carried out their well planned campaign and all but successful designs against Rome in the face of the united protest of the pagan pontiffs. The true religion had a power to resist the foe and to gather the fragments scattered, divided and sub-divided by polytheism into one grand society, noted for its morality, its laws and its government. That star of Bethlehem, which attracted the untutored shepherds of old to the crib, has advanced to meridian splendor to show the peoples of the earth the power of a doctrine which has liberated the slave, converted and mollified the savage, inspired hope and saved the human race from vices worse perhaps than those chronicled by the historians of boasted pagan Rome.

*Suet. †Josephus de Bell, Jud. lib. VII. ‡Tacit., Book 15.



CHAPTER X.

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE CONFESSIONAL HAS NOT AND COULD NOT
 CIVILIZE A SINGLE TRIBE, PEOPLE OR NATION.—CHRISTIANITY
 WITHOUT THE CONFESSIONAL BREEDS CONTEMPT OF THE
 WORDS OF GOD, OF THE SACRAMENTS, OF THE CLERGY,
 OF CHURCH AND SCHOOL, ACCORDING TO MARTIN
 LUTHER HIMSELF.

Christianity without the Confessional could not have converted the world. Christianity without the Confessional has never converted and will never convert a single tribe, or people, or nation. It may pervert but never convert. I may make heretics and schismatics but never a Christian nation. Such is the loud voice of history in favor of what has just been said. Our modern sociologists are discussing vexed questions regarding the evils which affect society and threaten its very existence. They are casting around for a solution. They are asking each other what influence shall be brought to bear on human nature to control passion, to restrain selfishness, to promote honesty, to encourage benevolence, to extend charity and to inculcate brotherly love. It seems the question is not difficult to solve. In the light of history, which is the Christian nation that is the more moral, the nation that acknowledges the Confessional as a divine institution, or the nation that repudiates it as the invention of priests and monks? In proof of our position and as a suggestion of the answer to the question just propounded in all fairness to Protestants, who no doubt hold a different opinion, we will take as an example that country where the Reformation first made its appearance, and the words of Martin Luther himself, leaving the careful, conscientious reader who is open to conviction to judge for himself. Dr. Luther candidly says, "The security among the poor people is now so great, that they laugh at the preachers." "The time will come," he adds, "when they will say, 'You are a fool; why do you care much about a sermon?'"* "Peasants and nobles know the Gospel better than St. Paul or Dr. M. Luther; they are wise and they think themselves

*Erlanger Ausgabe 1 : 103-1 4.

better than all their clergy."* "Peasants, citizens and nobles . . . boast that they do not want any preacher . . . and would not give a penny for any number of sermons."† "A poor village parson is now the most despised man of all, . . . so that there is no peasant who does not . . . trample him under foot."‡ "It seems as if the world was determined to starve the ministers of the Gospel to death."§ The preachers of the new Gospel come in for the following condemnation from their leader, Luther: "They lead such a bad life . . . that they do more harm than good."|| People have now so little esteem for the holy sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord. . . . it is as if there was nothing on earth that they were less in want of."¶ "Formerly, under the Pope, when we were forced and urged to receive the Sacrament, we went in crowds . . . now . . . our behaviour towards it is as disgusting and shameless that it is as if we were not human beings (still less Christians) but only sticks and stones, that stand in no need of it."1 "Under the Pope . . . people were very fervent in building churches. . . . Now that the true religion is taught, and that the people are properly instructed concerning good works, everybody is cold, so much so that we cannot help being surprised at it."2 "Formerly, they could build convents and churches, with an outlay which was quite unnecessary; now they cannot repair a hole in the roof in order that the clergymen may be protected from the wet."3 "Tell me where is there a town at present with sufficient means and piety, to contribute enough for the support of a schoolmaster or a clergyman?"4 "Such is the fate of the beloved Gospel; when it is preached, nobody is willing to give anything toward feeding and supporting the persons who ought to take charge of the pulpit and schools."5 "Formerly, when we served the devil, . . . all purses were open and there was no measure in giving to churches and schools. But now that the proper kind of schools and the proper kind of churches are to be built, nay, not built, but only preserved as they now stand, . . . all purses are bound up with iron chains."6 "According to its size every town could formerly support with ease several convents, . . . now

*Walch X^{IV}, 1360. †Erlanger Ausgabe 51, 188. ‡Walch V, 577. §Walch VI, 967
 ||Epp. Ed Aurifabre, II, 191. ¶Walch X, 2666. 1Walch X, 2715. 2Walch VI, 1211. 3Walch
 XIII, 8. 4Walch XI, 2522. 5Walch VIII, 2831. 6Walch X, 530.

that in one town two or three persons only are to be supported, who preach the Word of God, administer the Sacraments, visit and console the poor, instruct the youth, . . . everybody finds that too much, although the money has to come, not out of their own pocket, but from the property of others for which we are indebted to Popery.”* “Our peasants want a Christian liberty that will bring them temporal gain, but if on the other hand they give a penny to their clergyman, or do the least thing for the Gospel, even the devil cannot make them stir.”†

*Walch XI, 1758. †Walch XIII, 89.



CHAPTER XI.

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE CONFESSIONAL BORE THE FOLLOWING FRUITS, ACCORDING TO LUTHER'S OWN STATEMENT: NEGLECT OF THE POOR AND OF THE SICK; SAD STATE OF THE YOUTH; INCREASE OF DRUNKENNESS; INCREASE OF THE NUMBER OF SUICIDES; LOWER STATE OF GENERAL MORALITY.

Luther is authority for it that his followers used to say, "If we are not saved on account of our good works why should we give alms to the poor?"* "Formerly, under the Pope, people gave very largely indeed and beyond measure . . . then they gave in heaps, for they looked . . . upon the reward. . . . But now that with the light of the Gospel we are told nothing about our merits, nobody is willing to give and to help."†

"Formerly, when we served the devil under Popery, everybody was merciful and kind; then they gave with both hands, joyfully and with great devotion . . . Now that we ought to be merciful, to give willingly and to show ourselves thankful to God for the Holy Gospel, . . . nobody is willing to give but only to take.‡ In 1527 an epidemic broke out in Wittenberg, Luther's home. He writes, "The pest has broken out here, but in rather a mild form; however, the fear and flight of the people is something dreadful."§ Disease broke out again in the same town in 1539 and Luther, writing to Wenceslaus Link, says, "One person runs away from the other so that you cannot find . . . a servant. I think the devil must have taken possession of the people with the real pestilence, to fill them with such terrible fear that the brother forsakes his brother and the son his parents."|| "I am astonished, that the more we preach about the life in Christ, the greater the terror of death becomes among the people."¶ "It is a shame how badly we now bring up our children. . . . Parents allow their children to please themselves . . . mothers do not look after their daughters, . . . do not punish them, do not teach them to lead a modest and chaste life."1 "Everywhere . . . complaints are made about the disobedience, lawlessness and pride of the young people."2 Luther admits that drunkenness "has spread among the

*Walch VIII 2683. †Walch VIII, 946-947. ‡Walch XI, 1758. §Epp Ed Aurif. II, 345. ||De Wette V, 219. ¶Walch XXI, 1461. 1Walch XI, 8095. 2Walch XII, 895.

youth . . . so that now the greater part of the finest, most talented young men (especially among the nobility and at court) undermine their health, their body and their life . . . before the time.”* Speaking on the same subject Luther says, “I remember when I was young what a very great shame this was considered to be among the nobility.”† “We have now got so far that coarse vices, excessive drinking and rioting are no longer looked upon as a disgrace, but . . . drunkenness must now be called hilarity.”‡ “Drunkenness has now, I am sorry to say, come down upon us like a deluge.”§ “The people . . . look upon the Gospel as a doctrine . . . which teaches them to eat and drink. Such are the thoughts of almost everybody, from the lowest to the highest.”¶ “The people are like pigs, so to speak, dead and buried in constant drunkenness.”|| “What you write concerning the power that the devil has shown in the case of three men who have hanged themselves, I have read with fear, my Anthony. God gives us, ungrateful and arrogant creatures, a foretaste of his future anger, by conceding so much to Satan in our Church. . . . He (Satan) is the prince of the world; in order to bring us into contempt he pretends that those men hanged themselves, whereas he killed them, and, by working on their imagination, made them believe they had hanged themselves. . . . Satan’s presence is visible.”I “As soon as our Gospel began . . . decency . . . and modesty were done away with, and everybody wished to be perfectly free to do whatever he liked.”2 “We deserve that our Evangelicals (the followers of the new gospel) should now be seven times worse than they were before. Because after having learned the Gospel, we steal, tell lies, deceive, eat and drink (to excess) and practice all manner of vices.”3 After one devil (Popery) has been driven out of us, seven worse ones have come down upon us, as is the case with princes, lords, nobles, citizens and peasants.”4 “In all classes frivolity and every kind of vice, sin and disgrace are now much greater than formerly.”5 “I think it must needs be the case, that those who follow the Gospel (literally, ‘who become evangelical’) should be worse after receiving the Gospel than they had been be-

*Walch XII, 790. †Walch XII. ‡Walch XIII, 1572. §Walch XII, 788. ¶Walch XII, 789. ||Walch VII, 1896. IDe Wette V, 487-488. 2Walch V, 114. 3Walch III, 2727. 4Walch III, 2727. 5Walch V, 114.

fore, not on account of the Gospel but on account of the people who abuse the Gospel.”* “The more the and longer we preach, the worse matters grow.”† “People are now possessed with seven devils, whereas formerly they were possessed with one devil; the devil now enters into the people in crowds, so that men are now more avaricious, unmerciful, impure, insolent than formerly under the Pope.”‡ “After the dominion and power of the Pope has ceased . . . and the people, while despising true doctrine, are now changed into mere irrational animals and beasts; the number of holy and pious teachers becomes constantly less.”§ About a year before Luther cut the thread of life he admits; “We are living in Sodom and Babylon. . . . everything is daily getting worse.”|| A few months before his death Luther wrote to his wife regarding his own town wherein he so actively engaged himself in the preaching of the Gospel: “Away from this town (Wittenberg) . . . I will wander about and sooner beg my bread than allow my poor old last days to be martyred and upset with the disorder of Wittenberg.”¶ Luther confesses that he never would have preached had he foreseen the bad results. “See how foolish,” says he, “the people everywhere behave towards the Gospel, so that I scarcely know whether I ought to continue preaching or not.”1 “If God had not closed my eyes, and if I had foreseen these scandals, I would never have begun to teach the Gospel.”2 More than twenty years after the Reformation Luther admitted: “Who would have begun to preach if we had known beforehand that so much unhappiness, tumult, scandal, blasphemy, ingratitude and wickedness would have been the result?”3 Luther himself did not become better by his new Gospel. “I confess,” he says, “that I am much more negligent than I was under the Pope, and there is now nowhere such an amount of earnestness under the Gospel as was formerly seen among the monks and priests.”4 Thoughtful reader, had the confessional still exercised its benign influence on society, think you, could the morals of the people take such a downward course as that confessed by the father of the Reformation?

*Walch XIII, 2193. †Walch XII, 2120. ‡Walch XIII, 11. §Walch I, 615. ||De Wette V, 722. ¶De Wette V, 753. 1Walch XI, 3052. 2Walch VI, 920. 3Walch VIII, 564, 4Walch IX, 1311.

CHAPTER XII.

THE UNITED WISDOM OF MAN HAS NEVER AND CAN NEVER DISCOVER A
BETTER MEDICINE FOR THE ILLS OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND SO-
CIETY THAN THE CONFESSIONAL.—IT MAKES GOOD
CHRISTIANS AND GOOD CITIZENS.

The thoughtful, earnest sociologist and the humanitarian are unceasing in their efforts to find a remedy for the evils which threaten society. Some claim that legislators and officers of the law can do much if they would to bring about a better state of affairs. But this cannot be so to any great extent, for no man or number of men can legislate the dishonest honest, the intemperate temperate, the impure pure, and the officers of the law, however vigilant, are as unsuccessful. So-called preachers of the gospel attribute great efficacy to revival meetings. That semblance of penance, piety or whatever else it is called, is short lived. Converts soon forget the mourners' bench and the restraints of religion, if restraints they can be called, in the hum of business, companionship of associates and the enjoyment of passions. Even our missions so often preached with such fervor and zeal, would bear but little fruit were it not for the Confessional. To them the united efforts of pastor and missionary may bring large crowds of seemingly earnest hearers; yes, every one, bad and good, in the parish may come and go daily, but what will bring to a sense of duty that strong, robust young man whose passions grow with his growth and whose frequent indulgence only strengthens them; but what will stop for more than a time that youthful desire for parties of pleasure, that depraved taste for voluptuous music, that tendency to vulgarity and that developing of the lower nature at that most dangerous time when youth is budding into manhood and womanhood; but what will change the heart of that hoary-haired father whose life has been spent in worldly pursuits to the prejudice of his own and his children's souls, whose views on education, reduced to practice, only make disobedient, undutiful and irreligious sons and daughters? Upon the mass of people (and for the time being only) is the spark of faith stirred up and fanned by powerful and eloquent sermons on the great truths of religion so that the light reveals the deformity of a heart hardened by vice and crime and sin.

Resolutions of leading a better life are usually formed, but what makes those resolutions Prodigal-Son-like, what makes them efficacious, what makes them the turning point perhaps of life? It is the Confessional. Were it not for this our best missions would produce little more fruit than the revival. The united wisdom of man cannot provide a remedy so efficacious, a balm so healing, a medicine so sanative for the ills of man and society as the Confessional. Here the penitent on bended knees, after having previously examined himself on the commandments of God, the precepts of the church, the deadly sins, his predominant passions and the duties of his state, lays open the true condition of his soul by a candid confession. Here courage begotten of grace, faith in the supernatural, a heart softened by contrition, rebellious nature brought under subjection, pride dethroned and humility exalted, the eyes, the lips, the tongue, in fact, the whole demeanor indicates an extraordinary change of heart. Here, conscious that his confession is useless except contrition is heartfelt, the penitent, by the assistance of God's grace raises the gloomy veil that shrouded his heart from the Confessor, determined to do and suffer everything in atonement of his sins; if needs be, reparation of his neighbor's goods or character is determined on; resolutions strong and efficacious of fidelity to God in future, are included in that humble act of contrition; absolution follows and the penitent, trusting more in God than in self, goes out from the sacred tribunal like a Magdalene of old, with a heart purified, clean, and rejoicing to receive the Bread of Life, to strengthen his good resolution and enable him to lead a new life. There is no other means given to man of improving his manners and elevating his morals like that of the Confessional. There is no other power on earth competent to control the passions, eradicate selfishness, injustice, impurity, disrespect for law and excesses prompted by the lower nature of man, than the Confessional. The Confessional unites man to God, creates a due appreciation of virtue and abhorrence of vice; convinces man of the necessity of authority and the degradation of disobedience. It enshrines charity in the heart and expells therefrom base love; it ennobles men and banishes slavery, appreciates fidelity and denounces perfidy, and affords strength and perseverance on our journey during time to eternity. The Confes-

sional stimulates the practice of those virtues which go to make up the character of good Christians and good citizens. It commands obedience to the law and respect for the rights of others. It promotes peace and harmony and good fellowship in the community. It controls the conscience, purifies the heart and elevates the soul. There is no good, practical Catholic who is not a good citizen, neither is there a bad Catholic who can be a good citizen. It is when the Catholic forsakes the Confessional that he becomes degenerate and not unfrequently a bad and dangerous citizen. No external refinement can compensate for the good offices of the Confessional, no civilizing influence (as we have seen from the pages of Roman history in a previous chapter) has ever equalled that afforded by the Mercy Seat of God on earth. Leaders of thought may propose systems of natural ethics for the betterment of mankind, the elevation of his morals and as a remedy against the ills which threaten society—all very good in theory, but in practice blank failures. One of our great statesmen, after dealing with the shortcomings and sins of the poor, middle class and rich, in turn, has this to say of our rulers and would-be rulers: "The age is not entirely free from a suspicion of cast; of whining and hypocritical pretensions in morals, education, art, religion and politics; and of all forms of this tiresome disorder there is none so senseless and fatiguing as the cant of civil service reform. . . . The president of the United States should be the best and strongest and purest citizen of the republic. But sometimes he is not. His subordinates should be specially qualified above all others by nature and training for the duties they are appointed to perform. But they are not. Legislators should all be the wisest and most experienced political economists of incorruptible integrity. But they are not. Judges should be so learned in the law that their decisions would never be contested or reversed. But they are not. All citizens should be tranquil and prosperous, contented to remain in their several conditions in life till promoted for merit, after competitive examination, on the occurrence of some vacancy in wealth or rank by death or resignation. But they are not.

In the ideal scientific state there would be no defalcations in office, no offensive partisanship, no incorrigible spoilsmen filling the

air with the din of their tumultuous discontent. The courtesy of the Senate would disappear. Executive sessions would be abolished. Nominating conventions would yield to boards of commissioners, before whom all candidates for the presidency and for Congress would appear for examination into their attainments in statecraft. Stump oratory would be a lost art. Political campaigns would be conducted like Chautauqua circles or Concord schools of Philosophy.

The torch-light procession, the multitudinous rally, the flaring bonfire, the voluntary contribution and the campaign lie would be seen and heard no more. Government would become strictly impersonal. The office would seek the man. The Sermon on the Mount would be the platform and the Golden Rule the policy of every administration, and the Government would be kept pure, as the streets of Jerusalem were kept clean by every man sweeping before his own door." *

Well said, indeed, but an adequate means to the end is not even suggested. It is needless to complain of sickness if we refuse to make use of the medicine prescribed by a skilled and successful physician. It is folly to complain of cold when we persist in receding from the fire. It is silly to complain of hunger and thirst while refusing to eat and drink. It is madness to complain of a malady while refusing to use a sure and tried cure. The united wisdom of man cannot provide a remedy so efficacious, a means so adequate for the ills complained of and which threaten the individual, the family and the state, as that which the goodness and mercy of God have instituted, and it is folly in the extreme to reject it if we wish efficaciously the end.

It is a delusion and mockery to run counter to the designs of God, and the people or nation guilty of this treason have always and will always suffer in consequence. Everyone who has studied the matter, must turn a deaf ear to mere human speculation and admit the wisdom and mercy of God in providing a remedy which purifies the heart, cleanses the conscience, humbles pride, eradicates selfishness, promotes honesty, guards society against anarchy on the one hand and tyranny on the other, elevates morals and refines manners, makes men good and useful members of society here and prepares and fits them for their eternal destiny hereafter.

*Ingalls, Globe-Democrat, April 9th, '93,

PRESS NOTICES.

"THE CONFSSIONAL, WHAT IT IS NOT, AND WHAT IT IS."

This is a pamphlet issued by the Catholic Educational Society, at Newton, Kansas. Tells what the Confessional is, and refutes the Protestant protests against it.—The American Catholic News, New York City.

"The Confessional, What it is not, and What it Is," is on our desk. It is by the Educational Society, from the office of the School Journal, Newton, Kansas. It is as excellent an exposition of this most important subject, condensed into thirty-two pages, as we have met. It is ably compiled, and should have a wide circulation. Price 25 cents.—The Kansas City, Ks., Catholic.

"THE CONFSSIONAL."

This is the title of a neat pamphlet just from the press of the Catholic Educational Society of this city. It tells what the Confessional is and what it is not, and quotes freely from the Scriptures and the greatest minds of all ages to sustain the author's claims. The work is written in a masterly style, and indicates that the author has given the subject careful study. Price 25 cents at book stores.—Newton Daily Republican.

"THE CONFSSIONAL. WHAT IT IS NOT, AND WHAT IT IS."

The above is the title of a twelve-chapter pamphlet just published by the Catholic Educational Society of this city. Its style and make-up are extremely attractive. The arguments are short, sharp and decisive. Those who believe in Scripture and history cannot well help accepting its deductions, as they are unquestionably conclusive. It differs from most of its kind in this, that the author does not give offense to any one, however much he may differ from him, but studies to convince by cold, logical arguments, which we think is the proper thing. It will repay reading and re-reading. Sold by book sellers at 25 cents.—Newton Daily Kansan,

A BOOKLET.

A booklet, just issued from the office of the SCHOOL JOURNAL, is on our table, with the title "The Confessional." It is handsomely gotten up in pamphlet form, and the mechanical work is neat. It is admirably arranged in chapters, each of which is complete in argument and deduction. The arguments are so well put, and authorities quoted of so high a standard, that it should seem almost impossible for those who believe in the Sacred Scriptures and history not to be convinced of the soundness of the doctrine of the Catholic Church regarding the Confessional. It is a book for non-Catholics as well as Catholics. Those who are skeptical as to whether the Scriptures support the doctrine of the Confessional will find their objections met, without a quibble, by argument which cannot be controverted. In fact every weapon that can be used in its defense, Sacred Scriptures, tradition, history and the admissions of non-Catholics is used with a master hand. As a treatise on logic applied, it is well worth many times the price charged, which is only 25 cents. For sale by book dealers.—Newton Weekly Journal.

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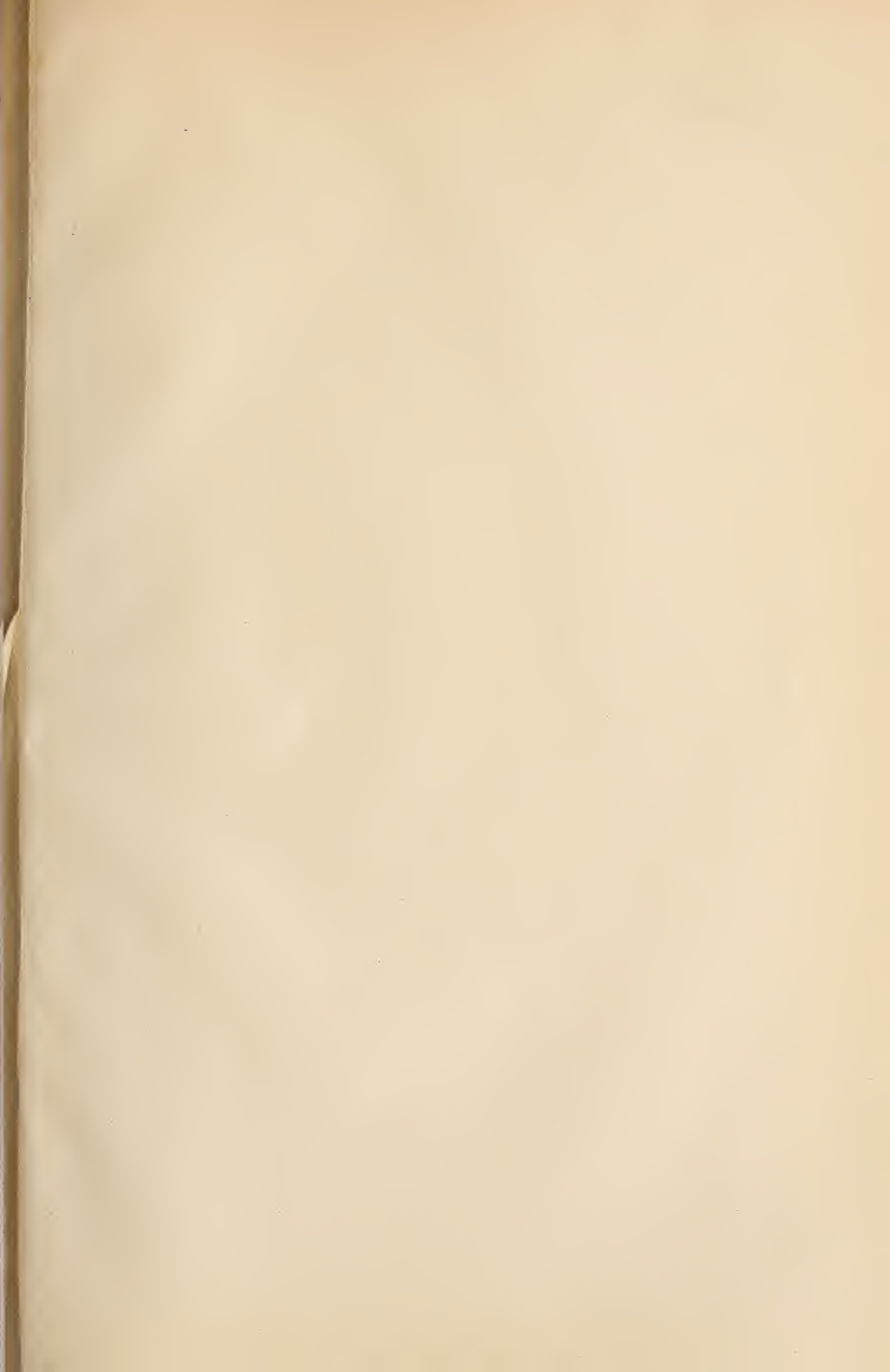
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